



Appointment of Chair

August 2019

Dixon Walter





Welcome letter

Dear Candidate,

Now is a particularly exciting time to join Your Homes Newcastle (YHN) as the Chair of the Board, and we hope that the information in this pack will give you a flavour of who we are and what we do.

YHN has an extremely positive and healthy relationship with its shareholder, Newcastle City Council, and we work in a spirit of genuine collaboration to ensure our strategic objectives are aligned and that together we can deliver outstanding experiences for our customers. We are ambitious organisations and have identified a range of key transformational and business priorities that will drive strong plans for YHN and fulfil our aspirations to do even more for the residents of the City.

As part of our future positioning, there have been significant changes within YHN, which began with the appointment of a new Managing Director in June 2016. A new 10-year management agreement has been signed and recently we have completed a review of our governance arrangements. We have started on a journey of major transformational change which cuts across both the business and our governance arrangements.

We are aiming to recruit a Chair who will complement our existing high performing team and sustain our momentum. We want a Chair who will support the delivery of our transformational plans alongside our amazing new Business Strategy.

We place great value on the contribution and insight a quality Board, and a quality Chair can bring to business activities. The role is complex and diverse, from strategic leadership, to ensuring great services to our customers. The Chair is expected to engage effectively at a senior level with our various stakeholders, the YHN executive team, and Newcastle City Council. We are looking for a Chair with energy, drive and ambition who through their authentic leadership can manage the dynamics of the Board and actively engages continuous development to ensure the Board remains focussed on priorities. We continue to operate in times of political and economic uncertainty, therefore you will be someone who can lead others to navigate change, and identify opportunities as well as risks.

We believe Newcastle is a great city and this is a chance to influence the quality of life of a significant number of its residents. We hope you will feel inspired to submit an application.

Yours faithfully

Pat Ritchie

**Chief Executive
Newcastle City Council**

Tina Drury

**Managing Director
Your Homes Newcastle**



About Us

Your Homes Newcastle ('YHN') is an Arm's Length Management Organisation ('ALMO') set up and solely owned by Newcastle City Council. YHN was set up in 2004 to manage council properties, to improve housing in order to meet the Government's Decent Homes standard, and to provide a range of support services for Newcastle City Council. Currently YHN manages over 26,100 tenanted and 1,500 leasehold homes (where the owner owns the property but not the land the property stands on).

YHN is 'more than a business', YHN is about making a difference to people's lives and putting tenants at the heart of what we do.

As well as being a housing provider YHN also provides a comprehensive range of services which benefit tenants and leaseholders across Newcastle. Examples of some of the many services provided by YHN include:

- 🏠 Newcastle Furniture Service ('NFS') which was set up in 1989 to help tenants settle into their homes by providing essential furniture items and is now the largest furnished tenancy provider in the UK.
- 🏠 The Young People's Service which supports young people to find accommodation and provide the advice and support they need to live independently.
- 🏠 'Your Homes Your Jobs' and an apprenticeship programme which offer training and employment opportunities for YHN tenants. These programmes have been so successful that we've been increasing the intake so we're now able to help even more of our tenants into employment.

YHN is the sole shareholder of Abri Trading Limited, the commercial arm of the organisation. The YHN Board also acts as the "common purpose" board for Abri. In addition, YHN has a charitable arm, Asfaleia Limited, established as a Community Benefit Society, which uses the surpluses generated by Abri to operate the training and support services described above.

Newcastle as a city faces many challenges. Council budget cuts continue to be a significant issue for the city and, with this in mind Newcastle City Council is working with YHN to see how we can contribute to delivery of their strategic objectives.

In April 2016, YHN was awarded a ten year contract by NCC and this gives us a robust platform on which to build our own strategic direction and continue to develop and improve our services.



More recently, the Board undertook a review of the current Business Strategy 2016-2020 and agreed a refresh in line with changing demands on the business. The new business strategy – Destination 2022 was approved by the Board in December 2018, setting a clear vision of being ‘first for housing’ and purpose of ‘making living easier’, underpinned by four guiding organisational values; ready, amazing, revolutionary and energetic.

Three strategic objectives were identified to keep the strategy simple and clear:

- 1) Revolutionary services that support successful living
- 2) Amazing places where people are proud to live
- 3) Strong business fit for today, ready for tomorrow

In August 2018, YHN formally assumed responsibility of Newcastle City Council’s repairs and construction service, known as Building and Commercial Enterprise (BCE). A Memorandum of Understanding was agreed by both parties to outline the relationship and working arrangements, which affirms that whilst YHN now oversees the operation, NCC will continue to remain the employer and ultimately responsible for the service. A transformation programme to reform and improve the service began upon commencement of the new arrangements and is currently ongoing.



YHN is currently undergoing major transformation in its customer service offer across all customer touchpoints, and in April 2019 YHN and Newcastle City Council also agreed to bring together the Contact Centres. YHN will be responsible for transforming the telephony services to ensure an improved service is delivered to all tenants, customers and residents across the city.





The Board

The Board structure consists of four Council-nominated Members and eight Independent Members, including the Chair. Tenants are eligible to apply for the independent posts.

All Board Members make decisions that benefit the majority of tenants or that ensures some tenants are not better off at the expense of others. They do not take decisions that will only benefit people from one area at the expense of others.

All Board Members must sign a Board Member Code of Conduct that covers things like conflicts of interest. This is to ensure that people are acting in the best interests of the organisation, rather than for personal gain or other reasons.

The Board has ultimate responsibility for YHN, its trading subsidiary, Abri Trading Limited, and its charitable subsidiary, Asfaleia Limited. The Board's central role is to direct the Executive Team and to make decisions that are in the best interests of YHN and its delivery of services. The Board is not involved in the day-to-day delivery of services – this is delegated to the Executive Team, led by the Managing Director.

The Board is responsible for setting the overall strategic direction of YHN. It agrees what services are delivered each year and monitors their delivery. The Board agrees the broad detail of the capital improvements that are delivered to tenants' homes and the financial budget for each year. It is also responsible for ensuring that YHN and its subsidiaries act within the law and within budget.

Skills required

We are seeking expertise across the following areas:

General business skills	Commercial	Customer service
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strategic management and planning• Risk identification and management• Performance measurement and management• Experience of operating in a regulated environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Financial strategy and planning• Commercial awareness and management• Business development/growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Customer services transformation• Knowledge of areas / communities served by the organisation• Provision of care and support service



Senior Management Team

Tina Drury, Managing Director



Hailing from Kenton in Newcastle, Tina started her career in 1982 as a clerk at the City Council's housing department. Since then she has developed her career at a number of housing associations, helping transform homes and housing services in the region in previous executive roles at South Tyneside Homes, Castle Morpeth Housing and the Isos Group, where she was Group Executive Director (Customers and Communities). Tina joined YHN as its Managing Director in 2016.

David Langhorne, Assets and Development Director



David has worked for YHN for over ten years. In 2005 he left Northumberland County Council to join YHN as the Investment Planning Manager charged with undertaking one of the largest housing investment programmes the region has seen. David became Head of Service in 2009, then Director of Property Services in 2013, later Assets and Development Director in 2017. His

responsibilities cover technical services, property maintenance, investment programmes, regeneration, repairs and maintenance, leasehold and Right to Buy management, property information and health and safety.



Rachel Morrissey, Finance and Commercial Director



Rachel is an experienced finance professional who has held a variety of senior roles in finance. Qualifying as a chartered accountant in Newcastle in 1992 she then went on to develop her career predominantly in the private sector. As well as leading finance teams she has worked as an IT consultant and as a management consultant, for KPMG and then PricewaterhouseCoopers, advising companies on how to improve their finance functions. Before joining YHN in December 2018, Rachel worked at Balfour Beatty plc, where she led a large team within accounting shared services for five years. Rachel oversees our finance, resources

and IT functions and our commercial businesses.

Matthew Foreman, Customer Services Director



Matthew Foreman has had a long career in housing in the North East region, first working with Gateshead Council in a number of housing-related roles over ten years, including supporting the setting up of its ALMO, the Gateshead Housing Company. From there he moved on to South Tyneside Council, and again was involved in the setting up of its ALMO, South Tyneside Homes. He then moved on

to North Tyneside Homes, North Star Homes and most recently Durham Housing Group. He also spent some time on the Board at Derwentside Homes and is a CIH North East Board Member. Matthew oversees YHN's housing and supported services functions.



Chair role profile

Accountable to

Newcastle City Council Chief Executive

Responsible for

YHN Board members

Role summary

To lead the common purpose Board for YHN and Abri Trading Limited keeping the Board work focussed on the organisations vision, purpose and strategic direction.

- To ensure an effective relationship between:
 - the Board and staff
 - the Board and the external stakeholders/community
- To act as a spokesperson and figurehead for the YHN group as appropriate.
- To support the Managing Director.
- To facilitate good board leadership and governance.

Key responsibilities

Leading the organisation

- Plan and prepare for Board meetings and Board strategic away days, with others as appropriate.
- Chair Board meetings, ensuring:
 - A balance is struck between time-keeping and space for discussions.
 - Business is dealt with appropriately and decisions made.
 - Decisions, actions and deliberations are adequately minuted.
 - The implementation of decisions is clearly assigned and monitored subsequently
 - The Non-Executive members hold the Executive to account for the performance of the organisation.
- Ensure adequate support and supervision arrangements are made for the Managing Director and any other staff directly reporting to the Board.
- The Chair has responsibilities outside of a Board meeting as well as during Board meetings.



Key responsibilities

Developing the organisation

- Ensure the annual appraisal and objective setting of the Managing Director is undertaken.
- Conduct an annual appraisal with each individual Board member and subsidiary Chair.
- Ensure that the ongoing training and development needs of the Board, corporately and individually, are identified and met, ensuring a commitment to continuous development is supported.
- Working collaboratively with the MD, the Chair should mould the Boards culture and work.

Sustaining the organisation

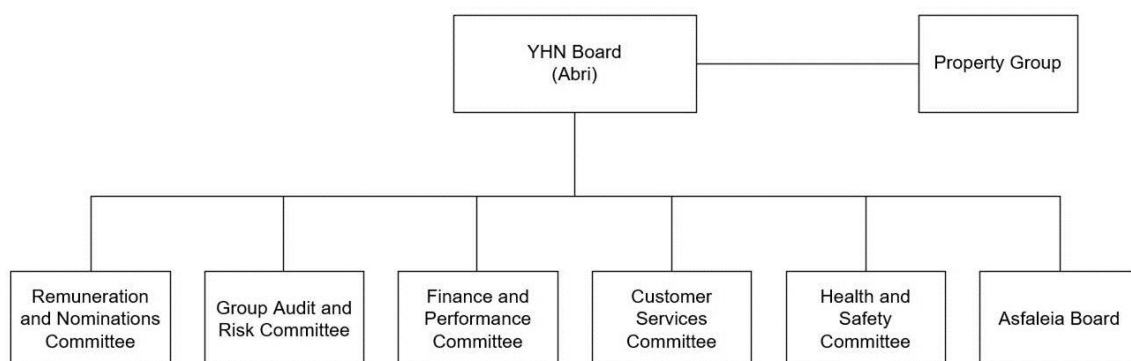
- Ensure that the Board and its committees have the appropriate balance of skills, experience, independence and knowledge required as set out in the Board skills matrix.
- Ensure that a robust succession plan is in place for the Managing Director.
- Chair the Remuneration & Nominations Committee to make Board appointments as and when required.
- Establish and maintain a constructive working relationship with the shareholder (NCC Chief Executive).

Key skills, knowledge and experience

- An enthusiasm to lead the organisation
- Previous experience as Chair of a Board
- Experience of managing performance against targets and strategic risks
- Possesses tact, diplomacy and powers of persuasion
- Possesses relevant sector knowledge
- Confident and effective public speaking
- Competent networker and influencer
- Promotes the success of the organisation in an ambassadorial role.



Governance Structure



Remuneration

The annual remuneration for the role is £12,000. We also pay expenses that are incurred on YHN business and other costs, such as costs associated with caring, to help Board members attend meetings. The posts are not eligible for the Local Government Pension Scheme.

Time Commitment

Taking on the role of Chair is a significant time commitment. You will be expected to attend meetings of the Board. You are expected to liaise with the MD on the work of YHN and on the forward plan for the Board, meet with NCC as the principal shareholder, and invest in the development of the Board itself. On average, you should expect to spend a minimum of three days a month on seeing through the duties of your role.

The Board will meet every two months on a Tuesday at 5pm and meetings run on average for around two hours, although occasionally they may be longer. You will also be expected to attend at least one Committee meeting of each committee per year, and two Board strategic away days per year, along with Board training and development sessions. Committee meetings are held at YHN House and last no more than two hours.



Terms of Office

Terms of office are as follows: initial term of up to 3 years, with a second 3-year term possible, subject to satisfactory annual appraisal by the NCC Chief Executive.

Location

Board meetings take place at YHN House, South Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE7 7LX.

Training and support

We offer a full induction programme for all new Board members. An annual learning and development plan is in place to make sure that all Board members are equipped with the appropriate skills and knowledge to participate and make informed decisions at Board meetings.

We make every effort to help people attend meetings. This could involve reimbursing people for travel expenses or child care or other care costs. We can also assist by making information more accessible, such as via translation or providing written information on audio tape.





How to apply

For further information and details of how to apply please contact Sarah Walker on 0191 5005500 or at sarah@dixonwalter.co.uk

To apply for the role please submit the following to sarah@dixonwalter.co.uk

- An up-to-date CV.
- A covering letter that addresses your motivations for applying as well as your suitability for the post.
- A completed Equal Opportunities form (downloadable from this site <https://www.dixonwalter.co.uk/board-practice/opportunities/chair/>)

Following receipt of your application, you will receive an acknowledgement from Dixon Walter. Within this response, you will be required to provide consent under the new general data protection regulations. If you fail to provide this consent your application will not be processed further.

Diversity is valued at both Dixon Walter and Your Homes Newcastle and we welcome applications from all sections of the community.

Closing date: Friday 30th August 2019

Final stage selection: Thursday 10th October 2019



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